Statewide Collision Categories

Table 1 compares major collision categories and measures of exposure for 2000 through 2004. The total number of traffic collisions in 2004 increased by 6.1% from 2003, while fatal collisions decreased 8%. Total fatalities decreased 11.3% from the previous year, while the number of injuries increased by 1.9%. The number of property damage collisions increased by 8.8%.

Table 1
Idaho Traffic Collision Data and Measures of Exposure: 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change 2003-2004	Avg. Change 2000-2003
Total Collisions	26,241	26,090	26,477	26,700	28,332	6.1%	0.6%
Fatal Collisions	241	225	230	261	240	-8.0%	3.0%
Persons Killed (Fatalities)	276	259	264	293	260	-11.3%	2.3%
Injury Collisions	9,392	9,231	9,688	9,661	9,843	1.9%	1.0%
Persons Injured	14,276	14,021	14,762	14,601	14,734	0.9%	0.8%
Property-Damage-Only Collisions (>$750)	16,608	16,634	16,559	16,778	18,249	8.8%	0.3%
Idaho Population (thousands)	1,294	1,321	1,341	1,366	1,393	2.0%	1.8%
Licensed Drivers (thousands)	893	901	911	926	948	2.4%	2.0%
Vehicle Miles of Travel (millions)	13,728	14,299	14,303	14,400	14,825	2.9%	1.6%
Registered Vehicles (thousands)	1,340	1,247	1,331	1,316	1,386	5.3%	-0.4%

Changes in the number of collisions can often be correlated with changes in state population, the number of drivers, number of registered vehicles, and the statewide Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel (AVMT). In 2004, the number of licensed drivers increased by 2.4%, the population grew by 2%, and the number of registered motor vehicles increased by 5.3%.

The statewide AVMT increased by 2.9% in 2004. Commercial vehicles accounted for 18% of the statewide AVMT in 2004.

Fatality and Injury Rates

Table 2 shows the fatality and injury rates for 2000-2004.

Table 2
Fatality and Injury Rates per 100 Million AVMT 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change 2003-2004	Avg. Change 2000-2003
Fatality Rate	2.01	1.81	1.85	2.03	1.75	-13.8%	0.7%
Injury Rate	103.99	98.06	103.21	101.39	99.39	-2.0%	-0.7%

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate fatality and injury rates per 100 million AVMT for the U.S. and Idaho. The 2004 U.S. fatality rate and U.S. injury rate estimates are preliminary and may change.

Figure 1
Traffic Fatality Rates per 100 Million Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel
For Idaho and the U.S.: 1995-2004

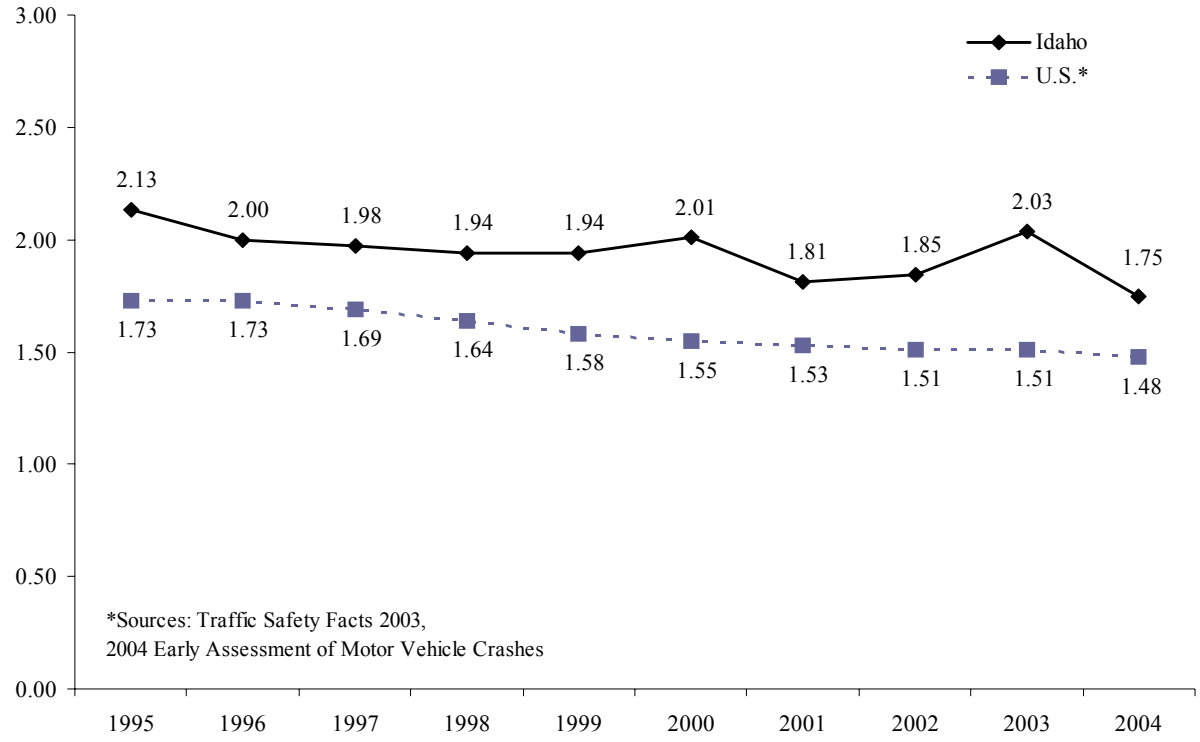
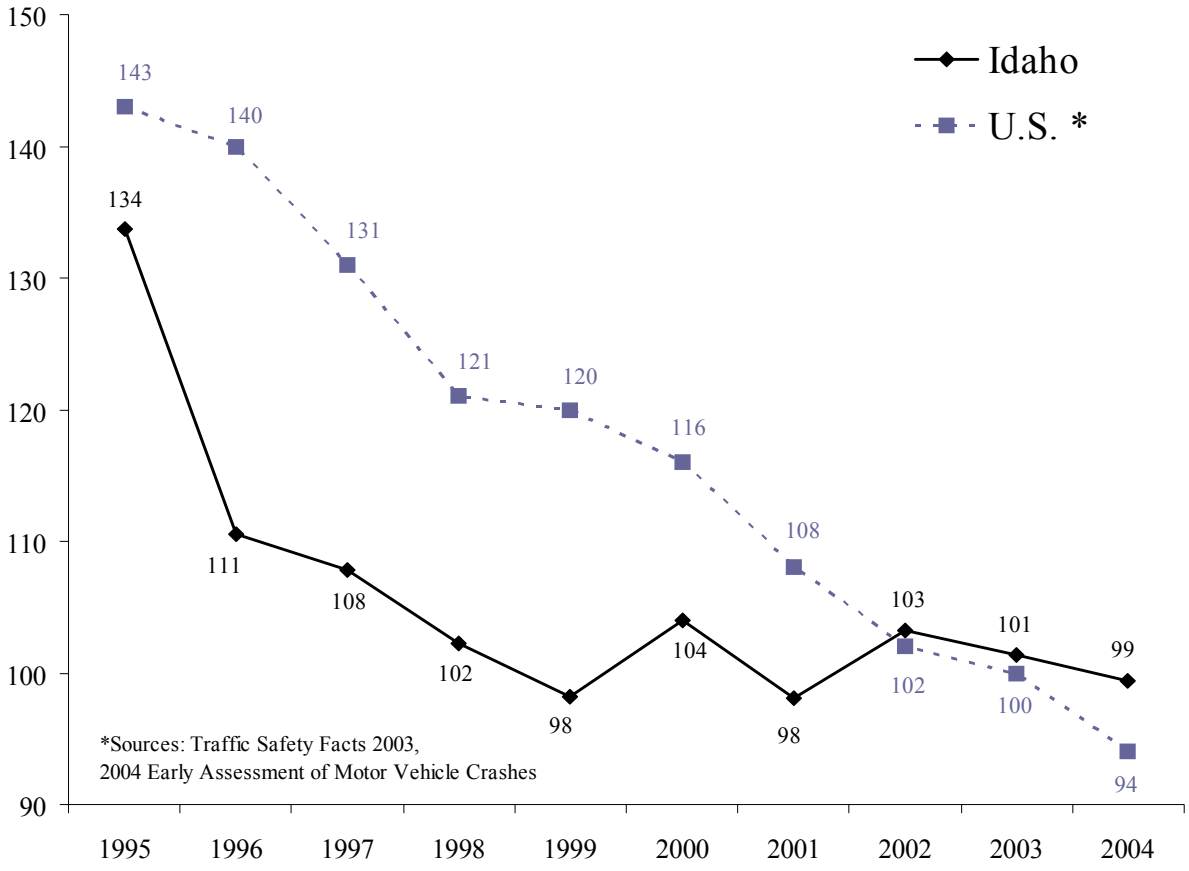


Figure 2

Traffic Injury Rates per 100 Million Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel: 1995-2004



Fatality and injury rates have varied over the past decade. Factors such as vehicle safety features, limited access highways, engineering improvements, occupant restraint usage, demographic changes and reduction in driving under the influence tend to reduce fatalities and injuries. Increases in AVMT, licensed drivers, registered vehicles, changes in reporting, and higher average speeds tend to increase the number of fatalities and injuries. The higher injury rate in 1995 corresponds with better identification of injuries after statewide training for law enforcement officers with the introduction of a new collision report form in 1994.

Injury Severity

Table 3 presents the injury severity distribution among persons involved in collisions from 2000 through 2004. The number of fatalities decreased to 260 in 2004.

Table 3
Injury Severity of Persons Involved in Collisions: 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Change 2003-2004	Avg. Change 2000-2003
Fatalities	276	259	264	293	260	-11.3%	2.3%
Serious Injuries	1,733	1,615	1,750	1,607	1,667	3.7%	-2.2%
Visible Injuries	5,390	5,258	5,347	4,922	4,526	-8.0%	-2.9%
Possible Injuries	7,153	7,148	7,665	8,072	8,541	5.8%	4.2%
No Injuries	52,482	52,013	52,995	53,613	56,884	6.1%	0.7%
Unknown / Missing	1238	1,157	1,156	812	808	-0.5%	-12.1%
Total Persons in Collisions	68,272	67,450	69,177	69,319	72,686	4.9%	0.5%

There was no single reason why fatalities increased in 2003. Increases were seen in just about all areas that contribute to crashes. Traffic crashes are rare events and are subject to a high degree of variability, meaning they randomly go up and down.

Economic Cost of Collisions

Table 4 gives estimated economic costs for Idaho motor vehicle collisions in 2004. Estimates in this table are based on 1994 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) cost estimates for collisions.[1] The cost estimates are updated to 2004 dollars using the Gross Domestic Product Implicit Price Deflator Ratio. The components of the cost estimates include productivity losses, property damage, medical costs, rehabilitation costs, travel delay, legal and court costs, emergency service costs, insurance administration costs, premature funeral costs, and costs to employers. The estimated cost of Idaho collisions in 2004 was just under $1.7 billion. The total cost of collisions in 2004 was $54 million dollars less than the estimated cost of collisions in 2003.

Table 4
Economic Cost of Idaho Collisions: 2004 Estimates

Incident Description	Total Occurrences	Cost Per Occurrence	Cost Per Category
Fatalities	260	$3,205,589	$833,453,248
Serious Injuries	1,667	$221,925	$369,949,677
Visible Injuries	4,526	$44,385	$200,886,891
Possible Injuries	8,541	$23,425	$200,076,863
Property Damage Only	18,249	$2,466	$44,999,078
Total Estimate of Economic Cost			**$1,649,365,757**

In addition to the FHWA's study, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) also did a study on the costs of collisions. The NHTSA study not only concentrated on the costs of collisions but also who pays the costs. Table 5 is a combination of Table 22 and Table 23 from the NHTSA study, "The Economic Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2000"[2] and shows the source of payment distribution of collision costs for each component of the costs. The total percentage for each source of payment is also included at the bottom.

Table 5
Estimated Source of Payment for Each Motor Vehicle Crash Cost Component[2]

	Federal	State	Total Government	Insurer	Other	Self	Total
Medical	14.40%	9.76%	24.16%	54.85%	6.36%	14.62%	100.00%
Emergency Service	3.87%	75.75%	79.62%	14.74%	1.71%	3.93%	100.00%
Market Productivity	16.20%	3.06%	19.26%	41.09%	1.55%	38.10%	100.00%
Household Productivity	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	41.09%	1.55%	57.36%	100.00%
Insurance Administration	0.89%	0.51%	1.40%	98.60%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Workplace Costs	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Legal / Court	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Travel Delay	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%	0.00%	100.00%
Property Damage	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	65.00%	0.00%	35.00%	100.00%
Percentage of Total Costs	**6.41%**	**2.70%**	**9.11%**	**50.26%**	**14.48%**	**26.15%**	**100.00%**

The most significant point from the above table is that society at large picks up nearly 75% of all crash costs incurred by individual motor vehicle crash victims. These costs are passed on to the general public through insurance premiums, taxes, direct out-of-pocket payments for goods and services, and increased charges for medical care.[2]

Contributing Circumstances in Collisions

Figure 12 portrays the seven most prevalent contributing circumstances recorded for fatal collisions, injury collisions, and all collisions. For every vehicle involved in a collision, the investigating officer may indicate up to three circumstances contributing to the cause of the collision.

Figure 12
Top Seven Primary Contributing Circumstances Cited for Traffic Collisions in 2004